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SONG OF THE VINE, IN ENGLAND

Man:

O Vine along my garden wall,
Could I thine English slumber break,
And thee from wintry exile disenthral—
Where would thy spirit wake?

Vine:

I would wake at the hour of dawning in May in Italy,
When rose mists rise from the Magra's valley plains,
In the fields of maize and olives around Pontrémoli,
When peaks grow golden and clear and the starlight wanes.
I would wake to the dance of the sacred mountains bound-
lessly
Kindling their marble snows in the rite of fire;
To them my new-born tendrils softly and soundlessly
Would uncurl and aspire.

I would hang no more on thy wall a rusted slumberer,
Listless and fruitless strewing the pathways cold.
I would seem no more in thine eyes an idle cumberer—
Profitless alien, bitter and sere and old.
In some warm terraced dell where the Roman rioted,
And still in tiers his stony theatre heaves,
Would I festoon with leaf-light his glory quieted,
And flake his thrones with leaves.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Doves from the mountain belfries would seek and cling to me,
To drink from the altar, winnowing the fragrant airs.
Women from olived hillsides by turns would sing to me,
Beating the olives or stooping afield in pairs.
On gala evenings the gay little carts of laborers,
Swinging from axles their horns against evil eye,
And crowded with children, revellers, pipers, and taborers
Chanting, would pass me by. . . .

There go the pale blue shadows so light and showery
Over sharp Apuan peaks—rathe mists unwreath,
Almond trees wake, and the paven yards grow flowery,
Crocuses cry from the earth at the joy to breathe.
There through the deep-eaved gateways of haughty-turreted
Arno—house-laden bridges of strutted stalls—
Mighty white oxen drag in the jars rich-spirited
Grazing the narrow walls!

Wine-jars I too have filled, and the heart was thrilled with
me.
Brown-limbed on shady turf the families lay:
Shouting they bowled the bowls; and old men, filled with
me,
Roused the September twilight with songs that day.
Lanterns of sun and moon the young children flaunted me,
Plaiters of straw from doorway to window cried.
Borne through the city gates the great oxen vaunted me,
Swaying from side to side.

Herbert Trench

Wine-jars out of my leafage that once so vitally
Throbbled into purple, of me thou canst never take:
Thy heart would remember the towns on the branch of Italy,
And teaching to throb I should teach it, perchance, to
break.
It would beat for those little cities, rock-hewn and mel-
lowing,
Festooned from summit to summit, where still sublime
Murmur her temples, lovelier in their yellowing
Than in the morn of time.

I from the scorn of frost and the wind's iniquity
Barren, aloft in that golden air would thrive:
My passionate rootlets draw from that hearth's antiquity
Whirls of profounder fire in us to survive.
The serried realms of our fathers would swell and foam
with us—
Juice of the Latin sunrise; your own sea-flung
Rude and far-wandered race might again find home with us
Leaguings with old Rome, young.

Herbert Trench